

FUNCTION MAN – REFLECTION LETTER

As soon as we arrived in Brussels, we had the chance to take part in the Studio Sessions organized by Workspace Brussels, as well as witnessing a seminar given by Bojana Cvejic. We watched several performances by Brussels-based artists, and had very stimulating conversations with the theorists of the Life Long Burning program regarding contemporary performance. This was a wonderful opportunity for us to learn about the dance scene in Brussels and exchange ideas with other professionals.

We then started our work in the Ultima Vez Studios where we had the chance to work in truly remarkable conditions. We felt very grateful to be using these facilities and were very well taken care of by the Ultima Vez staff!

We have been able to use this time to gather material for the piece and experiment with ideas, focusing mainly on research and generating images as well as movement qualities that would fit or complete our main concept. We figured out several methods with which to deflate the “typical male gender role” for example by exaggerating it to such an extent that it becomes abject, or by focusing on being “unimpressive”. We also looked into pop culture references to male gender especially in action movies, and tried to find ways to include this influence in our research. Most importantly; it was a very important realisation for us to understand that we could really spend our time researching and generating new things instead of focusing on a goal orientated process. For this reason, the absence of final showing of our work was actually a great thing as it made us realize that we should not settle with a short range of material but rather keep expanding our horizons and continue our research. This approach allowed us to dig deeper into our understanding of the concept and also brought some unexpected pieces of material that we are very happy with.

We have also been able to realize that we wish for this piece to have a strong visual impact on the audience and for this reason we decided we would integrate video projection as well as putting a specific emphasis on costume within the final production. For this specific reason, we are dedicating a big part of the whole budget for production costs in order to bring our vision to life. The financial support offered by the Wild Cards program is thus an invaluable help for us.

We want to spend time experimenting with the impact that those visual elements will have upon the overall dramaturgy of the piece. Indeed, our next step would be to keep looking for residencies or other opportunities to continue developing the material we already generated (we have applied at Im_flieger and PACK Zollverein). We are looking for ways to find support in Austria and abroad. We are also actively searching for performance opportunities and hope to be able to première the piece here in Vienna. We are scheduling meetings with venues, and are really motivated to make the most out of this wonderful opportunity given to us.

Overall, our residency was very fruitful as we managed to draw a first draft of the piece, and now have a much clearer idea on where we want to take it next. We would like to use this letter to thank Dance Web and Life Long Burning’s Wild Cards for believing in our ideas and giving us the chance to see it grow. We also believe that it has made us both understand our own practice much more, as well as understanding each other in the studio and creating a very rich ground to our working relationship. We are now even more motivated than before to bring “function man” on stage and keep on exploring the potential of this project.

Yours,

Claire Lefèvre & Matan Levkovich

